



C.S. Porter Mission Building Process Follow up Report and Recommendations

Overview: NCBI was contracted to facilitate a mission-building workshop for school staff, parents and students on February 12, 2009. The following summarizes the process and findings from the workshop and makes recommendations for next steps to create a working mission statement for the school.

Workshop Summary:

The stated purpose of the workshop was to build a shared sense of mission and educational purpose among school staff, students and parents.

All participants had the opportunity to choose from three break-out groups: performance, drawing or writing. Each break-out group was staff led, and offered a facilitated process to connect participants to their sense of mission and purpose for the school.

Each breakout group began with participants brainstorming answers to the following questions, each written on a separate piece of newsprint.

- What heartfelt words best describe your hopes for C.S. Porter students?
- What heartfelt words best describe your hopes for all C.S. Porter staff?
- What heartfelt words best describe your hopes for C.S. Porter families?

After generating a long list, participants took turns circling three key words under each question that best reflected their hopes for that population. Those words with the most circles became core concepts for the groups to work with over the next two-hours as they strove to connect with and reflect the mission of C.S. Porter.

The writing group approached mission-building through a letter-writing activity. Participants had to first choose a character for the letter's author, writing from the perspective of a student, teacher, or parent. Participants were encouraged to write from a voice other than their own. Next, they selected a group to send the letter to, choosing again from students, teachers or parents. In the letter they were to share two tangible and two intangible gifts they wanted to offer the letter's recipients. The completed letters were collaged and displayed on panels. When the three working groups came back together at the end of the day, each author shared a few lines from their letters with the group.

In the drawing group participants blindly selected a word -- one of the core concepts the group had identified -- from a bag, then created an oil pastel image reflecting that word. The images were cut out and collaged on panels and displayed for the large group.

The performance group had each member choose a particular character within the school community: the lunch duty, the principal, the righteous parent, the jock, the socially awkward kid, etc. They were charged with giving a welcoming address to kickoff the school year in 2014, and reflect back on how their time at C.S. Porter impacted the past 5 years.

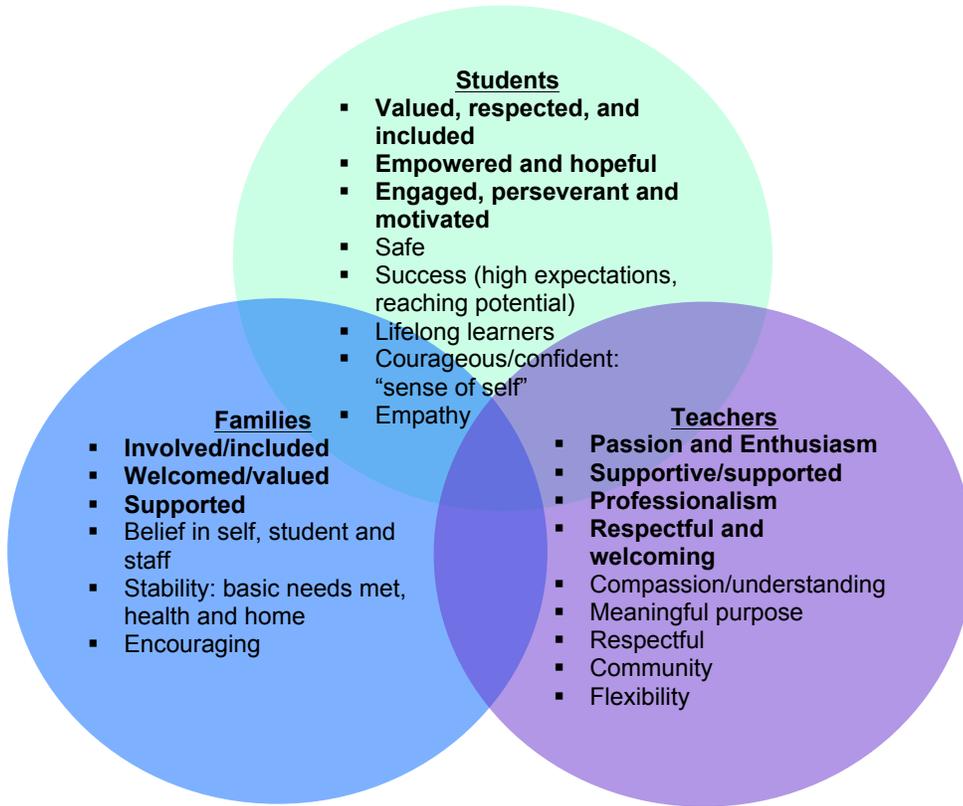
The result on each groups work was an astounding reflection of the school's values, mission, and creativity. After each group presented back to the whole, participants took a moment to write down what touched them and inspired them about the presentation. All of those reflections were gathered, along with lists of "heartfelt words" generated in each breakout group. A summary is attached.

To complete the day, a mission-writing working group was established to take the concepts and reflections generated during the workshop and begin translating them into a working mission statement that will be known and felt throughout the school while informing educational practice. This group of parents, staff and students will meet Thursday Friday 27th from 11:30-3:30 at C.S. Porter.

Next Steps:

1. Draft Mission Statement: An outline for the 2/27 meeting is as follows:
 - a. Welcome and introductions
 - b. Review process and results of mission-building workshop
 - c. Overview mission statement and vision statement goals and purposes
 - d. Small groups to draft statements
 - e. Large group review statements, identify key phrasing
 - f. Create final draft language
 - g. Create plan for gathering student, staff, and parent input
2. Gather input
3. Implement Mission

Summary of heartfelt words reflecting hopes for C.S. Porter students, families and staff:



Summary of Reflection Sheets:

<u>Core Concepts</u>	<u># of times noted</u>
Belief in each persons potential	28
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ fostering perseverance and empowerment to find and fulfill that potential ▪ inspire, create hope and optimism ▪ foster risk-taking and confidence 	
Value and well being of each individual student	25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Know each student ▪ Respect, compassion, care and support for students and families 	
Teamwork, unity and belonging	9
Student success	6
Form	# of times noted
Tangible and intangible gifts	10
Creative	7
Meaningful and heartfelt	7
Inspiring, hopeful and beautiful	7

C.S. Porter Draft Mission Statement:

“We will empower, engage and inspire each and every student to reach his or her full potential as a life-long learner and respected member of the community. We will encourage students to pursue their dreams with confidence and passion in a safe, stable and supportive learning environment.”

Plan for gathering input:

Input will be gathered throughout March from students, families and school staff. All input should be directed to Karen at the front office. The Mission Statement Work Group will re-convene in April to review all recommendations for edits and submit a final draft Mission. Specific ways to gather feedback include the following.

- Staff: Karen will email mission to all staff asking for feedback.
- Students: Sarah and Marie will ask Comm. Arts teachers to gather feedback from students.
- Parents: Willy will get draft mission language on website. Nicky will get it in March newsletter. Kim and Abby will work on getting a table set up at the upcoming Parent-Teacher conferences.

April 24 Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Marie, Elijah, Cole, Bennett, Willy, Sarah, Nicky, Tara, Kim, Karen, Abbey, Joseph and Amie

Review of feedback to mission draft: We broke into three small groups, which reviewed feedback gathered from C.S. Porter Students, parents, and staff. A summary of this feedback follows.

- Students: Overall students liked the mission statement a lot, especially the first sentence. A few thought it was too long. Several wished that it included the word “fun” somewhere. Several talked about wanting the school to live the mission more by creating opportunities for community building across the grades.
 - We had a good discussion about the word “fun,” and ultimately decided not to include it, but rather to develop opportunities for students to connect with the mission on a deeper level, which will hopefully pull them into relationship with what is fun about learning.
- Parents: Overall, very positive feedback. There were a couple people who thought it was too long, and a few single suggestions.
- Staff: Overall, strong support. There were a few questions about who the “we” referred to in the first sentence, and a couple language suggestions.

Final language: Based on the strong support and a few of the suggestions, we made a couple small changes to suggest the following for adoption:

C.S. Porter Community Mission: We will empower, engage and inspire each and every student to reach for his or her full potential as a life-long learner and respected member of the community. We will encourage students to pursue their dreams with confidence and passion in a safe, stable and supportive learning environment.

The C.S. Porter Community includes every student, parent, volunteer and staff member.

Implementing the mission: We brainstormed the following ideas for implementation.

- Now
 - Have art classes do project where each student creates one letter that will be put together to form the whole statement. This could hang in the school, and also be photographed and reproduced as posters to hang in classrooms.
 - Include in student handbook (done)
- Before School starts in fall
 - Create a metal sign to hang in front of the building that reads: Empower, engage and inspire
 - Hang big version of full mission in prominent place inside school
 - Paint key words from mission in paws throughout building: empower, engage, inspire, potential, etc
 - Create new hall passes that have mission phrases on them
 - Create laminated paws to hang around school with key words
 - Create book marks with mission
 - Spend time at professional development days to set personal, department and school-wide goals to live the mission
 - Send out PSA to press to get article on new mission
- At start of year
 - At first assembly have students read new mission statement
 - Have a communication arts kick-off that combines 6th, 7th and 8th graders in getting to know mission, personalizing and paraphrasing mission
- Ongoing
 - Use school-wide meetings to revisit mission intentions and re-commit to goals
 - Rotate key phrases on reader board throughout the year: “empower engage and inspire,” “pursue dreams with confidence and passion,” “safe stable and supportive.”
 - Include mission concepts in Words of Wisdom
 - Integrate other mission centered activities in social studies and health curriculum
 - Include a mission column in newsletter and feature stories related to the mission (a student inspiring others, etc.)

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